(d) whether it is a fact that patent claims extend to all forms of genetically transformed soyabean, regardless of the techniques employed or germplasm involved;

(e) what is the patented gene bombardment technology; and

(f) whether any international patent regime has come into existence due to GATT which would clash with our national rights of protecting our agricultural growth?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (f) A patent granted in the European Union is not applicable in India. Plant varieties are not patentable under Indian laws nor are they required to be made patentable under the TRIPS Agreement (which provides, inter-alia that members may exclude plants and animals from the Scope of patentability) Hence, no international patent regime. on the subjects has come into existence.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(e) Particle bombardment is the method of insertion or DNA stretches or genes into intact cells at high velocity.

India's Gains from GATT

7397. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to a report published in the 'Economic Times' of April, 14, 1994 under the caption, India to gain little from GATT;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that the Asian Development Bank in its report 'Asian Deveopment Outlook 1994' have stated that India and other low income Asian countries are expected to benefit very little from the conclusion of Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations gaining only 0.5 per cent of the gross domestic product annually;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) the other recommendations of the ADB report ; and

(e) what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) to (e) There are different assessments of the benefits of the Uruguay Round which have been made by the World Bank, the GATT Secretariat, the DECL and the ADB. These estimatates vary largely according to the methodology used, Government is pursuing a policy of energetically promoting exports, and the target for the current year has been fixed at 25 per cent.

Condition of salt miners in Gujarat

7398. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that the salt miners in Gujarat are leading a life of abject poverty ;

(b) If so, whether it is a fact that they have to purchase drinking water and medical facilities are unheard of by these people ;

(c) If so, whether it is also a fact that on an average 4.5 to 5 paise of the selling price of Rs. 1-2 per kg. trickle down to these poor people and the rest is appropriated by traders and retailers engaged in the trade ;

(d) If so, whether Governmnet have drawn any plan to ameliorate